GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3874
ANSWERED ON:21.04.2008
UNLICENSED BT COTTON
Barman Shri Hiten;Barman Shri Ranen

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether unlicensed Bt. Cotton seeds have made their way into the market in a big way;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such Bt. Cotton seeds fail to germinate thereby causing heavy losses to farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government has taken steps to prevent such seeds from reaching the farmers; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and action taken against producers/suppliers of such seeds?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) & (b): Bt. cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop approved for commercial cultivation by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) in the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), on the basis of environmental and bio-safety evaluations. MoEF has intimated that M/s Navbharat Seeds Pvt. Ltd. of Ahmedabad had supplied unlicensed Bt. Cotton seeds in the brand name of "navbharat 151" in the market in the year 2001 and a criminal case has been filed against the said company in Ahmedabad High Court.

(c) & (d): The MoEF has intimated that no such reports have been received.

(e) & (f): The MoEF has framed Rules for the Manufacture, Use, Import,Export and Storage of Hazardous micro-organisms/Genetically engineered organisms or Cells Rules,1989 under the Environment (Protection) Act,1986 with a view to protecting the environment and health in connection with application of genetically modified organisms or products.Under these Rules,the State Governments have been empowered to constitute State Bio-technology Coordination Committee and District Level Committees to investigate and take punitive actions in case of cultivation of unapproved seeds or no-compliance of the terms and conditions stipulated by GEAC.Besides, awareness campaigns on various aspects of Bt. Cotton cultivation have been conducted in all Bt cotton growing states.